

REMARKS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of all grounds of rejection are respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Claims 1, 4-5, 7-8, 12-17 and 19-27 were rejected. By entry of this amendment, claims 19-20 and 23 have been amended. Claims 1, 4-5, 7-8, 12-17 and 24-25 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. No new claims have been added. Consequently, claims 19-23 and 26-27 are pending.

The Examiner objected to claims 19, 20 and 25 because of various informalities. In response, claims 19 and 20 have been amended to better define the invention. Claim 25 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Consequently, claims 19 and 20 are allowable and withdraw of these objections is respectfully requested

Claim 19 has been amended to better define the invention. Claim 19 recites a two part lockout device including an interior closed ended half cylinder nested within an exterior closed ended half cylinder. The interior and exterior half cylinders each having a circumferential wall having an inner surface and an outer surface. The device includes a T slot that includes a T slot track formed in the inner surface of the circumferential wall of the exterior half cylinder and a T slot rail attached to the outer surface of the circumferential wall of the interior half cylinder. The T slot rail slides into and out of the T slot track when the lockout device is moved between a closed position and an open position. The device further includes an interlock attached to one end of the T slot. The interlock includes a bar crossmember disposed on the T slot rail and an extended portion of the T slot track that protrudes toward the inner surface of the circumferential wall of the exterior half cylinder. The bar crossmember slides past the extended portion when the interior half cylinder is fully telescoped out of the exterior half cylinder to place the device in the closed position.

The Examiner has rejected claim 19 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wood in view of Ryan, Shipman and Wick. The combination of these four references does not teach or suggest all the limitations of claim 19 as amended. Specifically, none of the cited references teach, disclose or suggest the limitation of an interlock having an extended portion

that protrudes toward the inner surface of the circumferential wall of the exterior half cylinder such that the bar crossmember slides past the extended portion when the interior half cylinder is fully telescoped and the device is in the closed position. Therefore, claim 19 is allowable and the undersigned respectfully requests reconsideration.

Claim 20 has been amended to better define the invention. Claim 20 recites a lockout device having an inner piece including a rail and an outer piece including a track. The inner piece is nested within the outer piece. The rail slides along the track to rotate the inner piece in a first direction toward a closed position and in a second direction toward an open position. The device further includes a crossmember formed as part of the rail. The track includes two edges, one or more of the edges having an extended portion that protrudes inward into toward a co-axial center of the inner and outer pieces. The crossmember rotates in the first direction past the one or more extended portions of the edges of the track when the lockout device is in the closed position. The engagement of the crossmember and the extended portions of the edges of the track prevents further rotational movement of the inner piece relative to the outer piece in the first direction beyond the closed position.

The Examiner has rejected claim 20 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wood in view of Ryan, Shipman and Wick. The Examiner has also rejected claim 20 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shipman in view of Wick. Any combination of these four references does not teach or suggest all the limitations of claim 20 as amended. Specifically, none of the cited references teach, disclose or suggest the limitation of an extended portion that protrudes inward into toward a co-axial center of the inner and outer pieces, such that engagement of the crossmember and the extended portion prevents further rotational movement of the inner piece relative to the outer piece in the first direction. Therefore, it is believed claim 20 is allowable and the undersigned respectfully requests reconsideration.

Claim 23 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 25. Claim 23 recites a lockout device including an inner piece and an outer piece. The inner piece and the outer piece are telescopically engaged such that the inner piece is substantially nested within the outer piece when the lockout device is in an opened position and substantially extended from within the

outer piece when the lockout device is in a closed position. The device further includes an interlock, wherein the interlock includes a crossmember that engages a portion of a track when the lockout device is in the closed position, wherein the engagement of the crossmember the portion of the track prevents further telescopic movement of the pieces beyond the closed position.

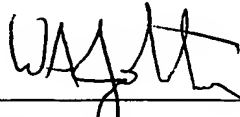
The Examiner has rejected claim 23 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shipman in view of Howisen. The combination of these two references does not teach or suggest all the limitations of claim 23 as amended. Specifically, none of the cited references teach, disclose or suggest the limitation of a crossmember that engages a portion of the track when the lockout device is in the closed position, such that the engagement prevents further telescopic movement of the pieces beyond the closed position. Therefore, claim 23 is allowable and the undersigned respectfully requests reconsideration.

The remaining pending dependent claims are allowable at least based on direct or indirect dependence on allowable independent claim 19, 20 and 23.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all pending claims of this application are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, a Notice of Allowance for all pending claims of this application is respectfully solicited. Furthermore, if the Examiner believes that additional discussions or information might advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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